

Hello members of the Labor committee. My name is Mimi DeVerniero and I live in New Haven. Thank you for allowing me to tell my story about being a personal care attendant. The reason I am here today is to ask you to support the Domestic Worker's Bill of Rights.

I work for a family friend who is paralyzed from the waist down. I've been her PCA for a little over a year. She has one homecare worker who has been with her for over 23 years. Both of us would love to work more, but can't work over 25 hours for one client. But when my client calls me, I'm going to help her even if I've already worked my 25 hours. This restriction means that I end up working hours for free. Most of my days off are spent looking for other work, or finding something to help subsidize my lack of income, like applying for food stamps or fuel assistance. It is very hard to find another job because our schedule always changes, or we end up working extra hours because someone calls off or the weather is bad.

We rarely get a lunch break. We have no sick days. If I am sick, I have to go to work because if I don't work then I don't get paid, and there would be no one to take care of my client. Sometimes I have to take ask her if I can take a few minutes here and there just to keep up with her needs.

As a homecare worker, we do everything for our clients. We cook, clean, provide personal care—we have to be her mouthpiece, and act as her legs. Our work is very physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausting. The fact that my work is fulfilling, and I genuinely enjoying caring for my client, are the only things that keep me going day to day.

Anybody who works deserves basic workplace rights. When you're caring for someone it is good to know that you're basic rights are covered. Please support the Domestic Worker's Bill of Rights so that workers like me can continue to do the work that we love. Thank you.

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